

## **Grant funding available to develop housing and economic opportunities**

County of Kaua'i accepting applications for CDBG program.

With goals of neighborhood revitalization, economic development and improved community facilities and services, the County of Kaua'i announces that grant funding is available through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Applications are available and are due on January 7, 2005.

The CDBG program, funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), will offer almost \$750,000 in grant funds for fiscal year 2005. The money allows recipients the opportunity to develop viable communities by funding activities that provide decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.

Those eligible to receive funding are government agencies, private for-profit agencies, neighborhood-based non-profit agencies and small business investments.

To be considered for an award, projects must meet at least one of three national objectives of the program: (1) Directly benefit low- and moderate-income persons; (2) Aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blights; and (3) Meet community development needs having a particular urgency.

Types of activities that may be funded include public facilities and improvements, economic development, public services, housing, removal of architectural barriers, historic preservation and energy conservation measures and renewable energy resources. Activities that are ineligible for funding include the construction of or improvements to general government buildings, operating and maintenance expenses for public facilities and services, new housing construction and assistance to churches or faith-based organizations unless a clear separation of purpose, mission and organizational relationship can be established between the church and the project.

The aforementioned lists are not all-inclusive, said Jo Shimamoto, CDBG coordinator, and interested applicants should consult the regulations on eligible and ineligible activities.

"CDBG continues to provide funding for programs and projects that assist lower income persons beyond what the County budget can provide. The CDBG program achieves success through public/private partnerships that provide services which would otherwise not be available."

Selection for funding will be based on proposal concept, project readiness, financing, experience and qualifications and the completeness and documentation of the application.

Shimamoto said that technical assistance is available for those who have questions or need help with the application process. Assistance will be available until December 17. She suggests calling to schedule an appointment for assistance (241-4428).

An evaluation committee will review and score applications before sending them to Mayor Bryan Baptiste to review. Decisions are expected to be made sometime in February 2005.

Applications are available at the Offices of Community Assistance, County Housing Agency located at 4444 Rice Street, Pi'ikoi Building, Room #330.